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SUBJECT Declining Strength of the Union General de
Trabajadores (UGT)

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1. The Union General de Trabajadores (UGT) is alleged to be rapidly losing prestige among the workers in Uruguay. In Montevideo the only concentration of strength of the UGT is in the transportation unions, such as the unions of bus workers, streetcar workers, and teamsters. The Communists have exerted their greatest efforts on these unions in view of the fact that all other phases of labor activity can be controlled to some extent through the domination of these strategic groups.
2. The leaders of those unions not affiliated with the UGT are reported to be preparing an assault against the UGT by which they expect to gain control of the union of streetcar workers. Since the recent purchase of the streetcars in Montevideo by the municipality of Montevideo from a British company, the streetcar workers have become eligible for membership in the Municipal Workers' and Laborers' Association. The autonomous labor leaders are attempting to incorporate the streetcar workers into the latter Association, which is controlled by the Federacion Uruguaya de Empleados de Comercio e Industria (FUECI).
3. The FUECI is carrying on a campaign in the interior of Uruguay to wrest control and prestige from the UGT wherever possible; one of the directors of FUECI has stated that their efforts are meeting with success. Two cases are cited as examples of their activities: Hector Rodriguez, former textile labor leader, was sent by the UGT to prepare the organization of the two hundred workers of the Frontex factory in the town of Rivera. The leaders of FUECI intercepted this move and organized a nucleus of laborers and employees which counteracted the efforts of the UGT. In Rocah, where the UGT had been making efforts to organize a labor union, FUECI leaders stepped in and established a labor center of considerable importance.
4. The leaders of FUECI are quietly striving to convert their union into a center of labor unions on a national basis, thus replacing the UGT. Already the FUECI is considered by source to be of greater importance in labor circles than the UGT, in so far as prestige with the workers and the number of unions being influenced is concerned. This campaign on the part of the FUECI is said to be merely in its beginning stages.

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